



City of Santa Barbara

COMMON QUESTIONS REGARDING SMALL AND MINOR NON-RESIDENTIAL ADDITIONS

What is Measure E?

Measure E was a ballot initiative passed by Santa Barbara voters in 1989 that limits the amount of new non-residential development within the City to 3 million square feet until the year 2010. This was done in response to resident concerns about living within the existing resources available to Santa Barbara and the preservation of the existing quality of life. The 3 million square feet was divided into categories available to different types of projects. These categories are: Approved Projects, Pending Projects, Vacant Property, Small Additions, Community Priority, and Economic Development. Minor Addition square footage is also available but is not counted in the 3 million square foot limit.

Does Measure E limit residential development?

No. Measure E applies only to new non-residential development in the City. The City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance encourage residential development, especially in and around the Downtown area. Property owners faced with limited commercial development potential under Measure E are encouraged to pursue mixed-use development projects. There are many successful examples of buildings with retail/commercial space on the ground floor with residential units above. Examples of detached residential and non-residential uses that are on the same parcel also exist in the area.

What is a Minor Addition?

The Santa Barbara Municipal Code defines a Minor Addition as a project involving less than or equal to 1,000 square feet of new non-residential development. This square footage can take the form of new development, an addition to an existing building, or the conversion of residential floor area to a non-residential use. Any legal lot, as permitted by zoning, is eligible to apply for up to 1,000 square feet of Minor Additions. Minor Additions are not subject to Development Plan review and approval.

What is a Small Addition?

The Santa Barbara Municipal Code defines a Small Addition as 1,001-3,000 square feet of non-residential development. This development can be in the form of an addition to an existing building, new construction, or conversion of residential floor area to a non-residential use. The Small Addition category was created to allow for the expansion and growth of existing businesses in the City while maintaining a limit on total non-residential growth.

There is a total of 600,000 square feet of Small Addition space available until the year 2010. This Measure E development category is unique in that the ballot measure stated that Small Additions shall be limited to 30,000 square feet per year. This limitation was placed on Small Additions in anticipation of the demand for Small Additions exceeding the 20-year allocation. The annual limit is intended to pace the rate of development in this category.

If the 30,000 square feet is completely allocated by some point in the same calendar year, no development in this category can take place until the following year.

What properties are eligible for a Small Addition?

Any legal lot, as permitted by zoning, is eligible to apply for up to 2,000 square feet of non-residential square footage from this category. However, the 2,000 square foot limit is a cumulative total per parcel until the year 2010. Small Additions are subject to Development Plan review and approval and must not result in any significant impacts on traffic, water, or housing.

How are Minor and Small Additions used together?

Square footage from the Small and Minor Addition categories are often combined and used together for a single development project. The 2,000 square foot limit per lot on Small Additions, combined with the 1,000 square foot limit per lot on Minor Additions, means that the total new non-residential square footage available per lot from these categories is 3,000 square feet until the year 2010.

The first 1,000 square feet of development on a lot is considered a Minor Addition in all cases. Any cumulative development on a lot exceeding 1,000 square feet up to the 3,000 square foot limit is considered a Small Addition. For example, an addition of 1,000 square feet would be a Minor Addition, while a later addition of 2,000 on the same parcel would be considered a Small Addition. In this example, the cumulative total of 3,000 square feet per lot has been reached and no further applications could be made for Small or Minor Additions.

There are also cases where square footage for the same addition may be drawn from both categories. For example, a 1,200 square foot addition to a building with no previous additions would use 1,000 square feet of Minor Addition square footage and 200 square feet of Small Addition square footage.

When is a Minor Addition considered a Small Addition?

When the cumulative square footage total per parcel exceeds 1,000 square feet, any additional development on that parcel must come from the Small Addition category. For example, an addition of 800 square feet to a building with a previous addition of 1,000 square feet would bring the cumulative parcel total to 1,800 feet. Therefore, even though both additions were less than or equal to 1,000 square feet, the later 800 square foot addition would be processed as a Small Addition.

Can Small Addition square footage be used with square footage from other categories?

Square footage from the Small Addition category can be combined with square footage from the Vacant Property, Community Priority, or Economic Development categories. It can also be used in combination with residential square footage.

How do I apply for a Small Addition?

The submittal of a **complete** application for review by the Architectural Board of Review, the Historic Landmarks Commission, the Pre-Application Review Team, or the Planning Commission will start the process for a square footage allocation. Please see the "Small Addition Allocation" sheet which outlines the Small Addition square footage allocation procedure. Planning Division Staff will be able to assist you in determining the type of review that your projects require and the applicable submittal requirements. All Small Additions are subject to Development Plan review and approval findings as described in Section 28.87.300 of the Zoning Ordinance.

For further information regarding Measure E or the status of development activity under Measure E, please contact the Planning and Zoning Counter at (805) 564-5578.